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Outcomes of the regional implementation meetings for the twentieth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

Note by the secretariat

1. The Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation), adopted at the World Summit for Sustainable Development in 2002, stated that the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the Summit should be effectively pursued at the regional and subregional levels, through the United Nations regional commissions and other regional and subregional institutions and bodies.

2. The Rio+20 outcome document ("The Future We Want") further stressed how regional frameworks can complement and facilitate the effective translation of sustainable development policies into concrete action at the national level. It emphasized that regional and subregional organizations, including the United Nations regional commissions and their subregional offices, have a significant role to play in promoting a balanced integration and operationalization of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in their respective regions.

3. The Commission on Sustainable Development, at its eleventh session, invited the regional commissions, in collaboration with the secretariat of the Commission, to consider organizing regional implementation meetings in order to contribute to the work of the Commission, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and in collaboration with other regional and subregional organizations and bodies, as appropriate, as well as the regional offices of funds, programmes and international finance and trade institutions and other organizations and bodies of the United Nations system. Such meetings should preferably be held before the review session of the Commission and should:

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(a) Contribute to advancing the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;

(b) Focus on the thematic cluster of issues to be addressed in the ongoing implementation cycle;

(c) Provide input to the report of the Secretary-General and the sessions of the Commission. Those inputs may include identification of obstacles and constraints, new challenges and opportunities related to the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and sharing of lessons learned and best practices;

(d) Provide for contributions from major groups, taking into account paragraphs 139 (g) and 149 (c) and (d) of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

4. Pursuant to the invitation of the Commission on Sustainable Development, all United Nations regional commissions organized regional implementation meetings in their respective regions prior to the twelfth, fourteenth, sixteenth and eighteenth sessions of the Commission. The regional implementation meetings were organized within the framework of relevant regional forums or as separate meetings. The outcome documents of the regional implementation meetings provided input to the Secretary-General's reports and created a good basis for the regional discussions held during those sessions of the Commission.

5. The regional commissions and their members agreed that the agendas of the regional implementation meetings would be guided by the Rio+20 outcome document. These have subsequently been developed to feed regional perspectives and aspirations into the global processes and consultations, by focusing on issues such as the institutional framework for sustainable development; the development of sustainable development goals, including in the context of the post-2015 development agenda; means of implementation, preparations for the Global Conference on Small Island Developing States, to be held in Samoa in 2014.

6. Regional commissions organized the following regional implementation meetings as a contribution to the Commission's session, and to ongoing processes in the context of the General Assembly, in collaboration with the secretariat of the Commission and other regional and subregional organizations:

(a) For Asia and the Pacific, in Bangkok, from 22 to 24 April 2013 (see E/CN.17/2013/3/Add.1);

(b) For Latin America and the Caribbean, in Bogota, Colombia, from 7 to 9 March 2013 (see E/CN.17/2013/3/Add.2);

(c) For Africa, in Addis Ababa, from 19 to 21 November 2012, within the framework of the eighth session of the Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development (see E/CN.17/2013/3/Add.3);

(d) For Western Asia, in Tunis, from 16 to 17 April 2013 (see E/CN.17/2013/3/Add.4);

(e) For Europe and North America, in Geneva, from 9 to 11 April 2013 (see E/CN.17/2013/3/Add.5).